

*The Heart
of a
Father*





THE HEART OF A FATHER

THE HEART OF A FATHER

A HUMAN DOCUMENT

BY
A WELL-KNOWN PUBLIC MAN

WITH A PREFACE BY
SIR JAMES MARCHANT, LL.D.
AND OTHERS



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DEDICATED
TO ALL WHO
HAVE LOVED AND LOST
AND WHO WISH TO KNOW

PREFACE

THE publishers, for obvious reasons, wish me to relate how I came into possession of this human document and to assure the reader that the writer of it is trustworthy.

I was recently editing a work on “Immortality” and at the same time gathering material for a companion volume on “Survival.” My mind not infrequently turned towards the author of the following pages, an old and valued friend, who last summer had lost his son under tragic circumstances and whose letters continued to sound the note of mourning. One morning his letter, even as I opened it, revealed, in the firmness of its handwriting and in its first word, evidence of a welcome change. As I read I realised

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that life, for the author, had again become a song. And the cause was obvious — the conviction that his dead son was alive again, the lost was found. A fuller account of this startling change came later and, after reading it and knowing that the author is a trusted public man whose testimony would be received with respect, I invited a number of friends to meet and hear it from his own lips. Those whose names appear below were so impressed by it that they spontaneously suggested that I should associate them with this declaration of our belief in the author's irreproachable honesty, and of our conviction that what he here relates he believes actually happened.

The Reverend Canon Vernon Storr, M.A., the Reverend R. F. Horton, D.D., the Reverend Principal W. E. Blomfield, D.D., the Reverend F. Fielding-Ould, M.A., the Reverend J. G. Henderson,

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the Reverend J. Marshall Robertson, M.A., the Reverend F. Richardson, A.T.S., the Reverend Thomas Nightingale (Secretary of the Free Church Council), the Reverend C. Drayton Thomas. These friends have read and approved this Preface, and will meet the author again to consider the issues involved. They bear this united testimony to his integrity without in any way committing themselves to any one explanation of the phenomena described. The author is alone responsible for this book and for the form in which it is cast. The story he relates is not ended. One day, when further revelations are completed, this account will be enlarged and in more strictly evidential form, and, bearing his own name, it will reach another edition. But for the present, and for reasons sufficient to those who know the circumstances (and the object of the author,

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which will be apparent to the reader), it now appears as I received it from the heart of a father.

JAMES MARCHANT

May 1924

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A HUMAN DOCUMENT

May 25, 19—

It is the most beautiful day of the year; wonderful in every way. The sky is of a deep blue, almost Sicilian in its intensity. The air is soft and warm, and vibrant with the songs of numberless birds. At dawn the silence of the night was broken by the liquid note of the blackbird which has settled in an old tree at the bottom of my garden. Other songsters soon joined in, and now, still early in the morning, there is a grand chorus of ravishing natural music. Amongst the various notes I distinguish readily that of the blackbird, which excels the others in

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purity of tone and penetrating sweetness.

From the top room of my house, which is situated on the highest point in this region, I can behold the Surrey hills and an undulating country between them and me. The stretch of landscape is magnificent and to-day it appears at its very best. The atmosphere is perfectly clear. The distant panorama is complete. Nearer to me is a cluster of beautiful gardens, offering a pageant of colour and the rare fragrance of thousands of flowers.

It is my birthday. Thirty-six years ago, at this very hour, I entered the world upon a day similar to this, so my mother has told me. The last natural sight she beheld, ere she yielded herself to the first pangs of maternal joy, was that of a field richly covered with buttercups: "a field of the cloth of gold" she called it. I came into the world wel-

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comed by the flowers and the mating birds. God has been very good to me. Strong and healthy at birth, I have been strong and healthy ever since, knowing nothing of sickness or sorrow. And to-day, in the plenitude of my manhood, I raise my heart in humble thanksgiving to the *Father* of my Spirit. Life has been, and remains, very beautiful.

A year and a week ago was my wedding day. I live over again the wonderful scene — wonderful to me. For ten years I had waited for my bride. She was difficult to win, but she was worth the winning. Always beautiful, she was positively radiant on that never-to-be-forgotten day — a year and a week ago. I see it all once more — the crowded church, the happy bridesmaids, the reception, the departure for the honeymoon, and, in the centre of all, that natural *Queen*, beloved of all who knew her,

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and worshipped by the man to whom she had vowed her life.

And now, as I look on the landscape, a great fear possesses me. In the room below lies my darling, unconscious. For months we have been awaiting this day, hoping that it would be bright and joyful. We have pictured the coming of the little stranger and already seen him nestling in his mother's bosom. Every provision has been made for him (as we hope) or for her (as it may be). The house is gay with flowers. The drawing-room has vibrated with the sound of music. Everybody has been in the best of spirits.

Suddenly, two nights ago, the blow fell without warning. The doctor was sent for hurriedly. A second doctor was summoned. After what appeared to be an interminable time, a grave face appeared in my room and a dreadful word

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... was spoken in my ear. The doctor told me the worst. "It is a serious business," he said; "you must brace yourself for whatever happens." I was made to understand that the lives of the mother and the child were in deadly peril and that I could hardly hope to preserve both of them. A day and a night nurse were engaged. Straw was placed in the street before the house, the knocker of the door was enwrapped with a cloth, the bells were silenced.

For two days and nights I have been in mortal distress. What if, after one brief year of unalloyed happiness, the supreme tragedy falls, and *she* leaves me, a desolate and heart-broken man! God in heaven, can this be Thy will? Is love, which brings with it the acme of bliss, to bring also this depth of sorrow? Once and again I am permitted to peep into the darkened room. There is no

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change. One side of her body is strangely discoloured, and death seems hovering above her. It is a question of hours only and then I shall know the worst — or best.

I pass into the garden smoking the pipe she bought me and which she entreated me to use. “I may have a bad time,” she had said, “and a pipe will calm you a little.” It was just like her, always thinking of little things which might bring ease and comfort to others. How dull has everything become! The deep blue sky, the multi-coloured garden, the songs of the birds — their charm has gone. For me only one thing matters, the saving of that precious life at any cost, even the sacrifice of the child upon whose advent we have both set our hearts.

Lunch is served for two — the nurse and me. Nurse hurries through her meal

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and rushes upstairs to her charge. My portion is taken away untasted. The critical hour approaches and there is some stir in the house. Two doctors have arrived. I strain my ears listening for any sound that will bring hope to a distracted mind. Nothing! Not so much as the feeblest cry. And then, after what seems an eternity, one of the doctors calls for me. "You have a son, sir . . . your wife knows nothing about it . . . there is hope for her . . . the worst, I believe, is over."

Ah! that moment must remain forever an indelible memory. As by magic the whole landscape changes its aspect. The sky is blue again, the flowers bloom anew, the air is filled with the songs of birds. The blackbird, which is settled for the season in the big tree at the bottom of the garden, might know what has happened. Never has it seemed to

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pour out its torrent of song as in this glad hour. The mountains break forth into singing and the trees of the field clap their hands.

When the strain was over, and convalescence came, they told me what had happened. I learned by how narrow a margin had both mother and child escaped catastrophe. The infant, when born, was deemed to be dead and was left alone while every attention was directed to the mother. Then a feeble cry was heard and they knew that the child had come to stay. In those few hours I sang my *Te Deum*, and she her *Magnificat*.

Two years later.

How that boy has grown, to be sure! Full of mischief and daring. He has been through every scrape into which an infant of two years could possibly fall. He

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has raided the lower shelves of the larder, pulled up by the root valuable flowers in the garden, lost himself several times, made everybody in the house cross and then laughed them into good temper by the magic of his dimples and the witchery of his smile. And now a little sister has arrived to keep him company. He is very much mystified about it. At first he was disposed to resent her presence when he perceived that she absorbed the attention of everybody. Later he accepted her, and now he is impatiently awaiting the day when she will join him at his games.

Seventeen years later.

Time has brought its usual changes. After the birth of the girl, it seemed for some years as if the full tale of the family had been completed. And then, eight years after hope had been given up,

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little Anthony arrived. He came in the fullness of time and in the summer of the year. And he cost his mother scarcely a pang. From the first it was apparent that he was quite an exceptional child. His little body was perfect, without a flaw. His head was large and the width of the forehead unusual. But the eyes! It was embarrassing to take him out into the streets. People turned round to look at him and ask who he was. Large, blue, sparkling eyes, fringed with wonderful eyelashes, they held within them a suggestion of eternity. The boy seemed to have brought with him a mystery of the life beyond the veil as if he had been upon earth before and had returned with the spell of the spirit world upon him. Looking backward to those earliest years of his little life, I can hardly resist the feeling that he was never intended to be with us for long. And yet — the intoler-

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able mystery of *that which happened later!*

From the beginning he was unusually strong. Closely knit and full of energy, he invited trials of strength with boys older than himself, and usually came off victor. Of fear he knew nothing. Darkness held no terrors for him. He would slip out of the house and run away to the railway station, remaining for an hour to watch the endless procession of electric trains. When anxious parents and maids sought him, he was generally found in the midst of a group of railway men, who fell under his spell and drew from him those odd remarks which seemed to blend the knowledge of a grown youth with the naïveté of an infant. He passed safely through all the air-raids which, when they burst upon London, held it for the time in terror. Once, when a rain of bombs destroyed a large area of property close to our home, all that fell from

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his lips was the exclamation “Bang . . . again!”

Then came the first school-days. Knowledge was absorbed by him with incredible rapidity. He scarcely learned . . . he just absorbed. When he could read, his first book of instruction was the “Children’s Encyclopædia.” After his evening bath he was allowed to sit up in bed, clad in his red cloak — now so precious to us — and read his “Encyclopædia.” In all kinds of odd ways the accuracy of his observation and reading was revealed. He would sit, this little lad of six, and tell the whole story of the development of coal, beginning with the forest and ending with the colliery. And he was never at fault. He never missed a single link in the chain, or confounded one thing with another. His brain marshalled all the facts, preserved their or-

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der, and presented them intact. Before he was six he had learned to use a delicate and expensive microscope with perfect accuracy. He would unlock the case, withdraw the instrument, attach the proper lens, adjust the mirror, and then yield himself for an hour at a time to the sheer delight of examining the marvels upon the miniature slides. The hour over, he would replace the slides in their box, replace the instrument in its case, lock it up, and return it to its corner in the study. Nothing was ever broken or misplaced. He could always be trusted with this delicate instrument. He was as careful of it as a man could be. . . .

Observation, schooling, and reading gave birth to some deep questions. Quite early he grappled, in his childish way, with the problem of God. In this he was like all other children. One day he burst upon me with his puzzle.

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“Daddy, dear, this world wasn’t always here, was it?”

“No, darling.”

“Then where did it come from?”

“Ah! laddie, that is a big question, and I am afraid I cannot tell you now so that you would understand. When you get older and can understand things better, I will tell you a wonderful story about it. But at present you must be content with knowing that God made it.”

“Oh, I know all about that, daddy, but what I want to know is where did God come from; and was God ever a baby, and who was His father?”

He was a born sceptic as surely as he was a born believer. No easy phrase would divert him from his quest. He would probe to the bottom of things. But with all this there was a wonderful appreciation of all beauty and rhythm. His little heart went out generously to

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everything that was lovely. Before he was two years of age he beat time to any music he heard. He detected in an instant a false note. He was a born musician. Seated at the piano, he would create his own chords, and rarely was there a discord. Nature made an immense appeal to him. He would wander off into the fields and return with a garland of wild flowers skilfully arranged to form a colour pattern. And he connected music, and colour, and beauty with the God over whom his little mind continually puzzled itself. When he was asked to go and see the new baby next door, he was very quiet during the introduction; but when he returned home his first remark was: "Well! I think God is very clever. Do you know I've looked at that baby and she's got *everything* — even her finger-nails. God's forgotten nothing."

And so he grew — alert mentally,

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strong physically, and rich in imagination and affection. Brought up in a home where entertaining was the normal thing, he learned quite early how to be generous. When friends made him presents of chocolates and sweets, he always passed them round to the entire company before selecting one for himself. In "swapping" toys and other articles with other boys the worst of the bargain invariably fell to him. He gave lavishly. Most of his pocket-money was spent upon others. I remember his last Christmas with us. A toy service had been arranged at church. The children were to march in procession bringing with them a gift of toys or books for distribution at the Children's Hospital. The idea did not at first appeal to little Anthony. He did not see why he should surrender a valuable toy to a perfect stranger. But when he understood the

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situation he got out his finest toy — a huge wooden engine — and asked that it might be repainted to look like new. And I can see him now, marching up the aisle, his arms filled with his engine, which he deposited with a sigh and a smile. . . .

As the hour of the tragedy drew near, the sweetness of the boy was remarked upon by everybody. He might have known that his days were numbered, and so he determined to fill every hour with beautiful deeds. On that last full day at home, some one at the dinner-table remarked upon the sad case of a widow who had to take to charring in order to support herself and her little lad.

“What would happen if *our* daddy were to die?” asked one present.

The mother replied: “Then *I* would have to turn out and work hard.”

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Whereupon little Anthony flashed out:

“You wouldn’t — I’d see to that — why, mother I’d marry you myself, and then you wouldn’t have to work.”

A childish fancy if you will, but it was the revelation of a generous heart.

There came a Friday, the last full day the little lad was with us. We went together — he and I — to post letters. Then I took him to be fitted for his new sandals, which, on the morrow, he was to begin to wear during the vacation. Then there came into the garden a number of his boy friends for a farewell game. The night was very hot and when bedtime arrived he could not sleep. At length I found him dressed in his pyjamas lying upon the couch in our bedroom, fast asleep. Without disturbing him, I lifted him gently into his own bed and kissed

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him good-night. O! God, if I had known that that was the last good-night kiss he would ever receive from his father's lips! . . .

The fatal Saturday came. His trunk was already packed in readiness for a long holiday. How excited he was at the prospect! When the taxi came he climbed up by the side of the driver, and we three — the boy, his mother and I — drove off. Never was he so beautiful as on that morning. Dressed in a new tweed suit and wearing a straw hat, he went out to what proved to be his doom. Ah! I see again so clearly and vividly his upturned face as he kissed me good-bye. I was to rejoin him and his mother on the Monday morning early. And so we parted.

Now I must relate certain psychic experiences which belong to the body of

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this narrative. Five weeks before the fatal day — the blackest day of my life — I had a strange, and what now seems to me to have been a prophetic, dream. In a vision of the night I beheld my boy struggling in the water of a river. I watched him from the bank and yet I was powerless to help him. Frozen with horror, I was compelled to watch the dreadful drama. Soon his dead body was drawn by unseen hands out of the water and laid at my feet. Then I beheld myself in the vision overcome with grief and trying in vain to restore his life. At this I awoke sobbing so violently that my wife started and asked what was the matter. Here I made what I now regard as a fatal error. I put her off and said that I had suffered from a nightmare. If I had only heeded that premonition, my boy might have been with me in the flesh at the present moment. But I ignored it

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and I am paying to-day with bitter grief and regret for the folly. . . .

My boy arrived at his destination at midday on the Saturday. A little later he went out into the fields to pick flowers for his mother, and then he wandered off for a stroll in a neighbourhood that he knew well, and where everybody knew him. . . . The tea hour arrived and the lad had not returned. Strawberries and cream had been set aside for him. Surely he would be back soon.

Then a policeman came up the carriage drive, carrying in his hand a boy's school cap. Could any one recognise it? . . . In ten minutes the broken-hearted mother was identifying as her son the dead body of a boy recently drawn from the water. So had my dream been fulfilled. . . .

During the enacting of this tragedy I was in my own city, more than one hun-

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dred and twenty miles away. At three o'clock on the afternoon I went to see a film exhibited at the cinema. The theme was an absorbing one and I entered into it fully. Suddenly my mind began to wander and the picture lost its interest. I glanced at the clock and found that the hour was four-forty-five. A strange sense of the nearness of my boy came over me and I glanced at the seat next to mine, half expecting to see him there. I became increasingly restless and at last rose up and left the building haunted by the thought of the boy. It never occurred to me that anything was wrong. Eight hours earlier I had parted from him and he was in perfect health and in the best of spirits. But the sense of uneasiness grew. The afternoon meal remained untasted — I knew not why. Then a haunting sense of the boy came over me. Somehow he was there in the

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room. I turned, half expecting to see him. The thought of him became an obsession, but there was no unhappiness in it, no suspicion of disaster. I can only believe now, looking back upon that afternoon, that the boy's spirit, suddenly torn from its tabernacle of flesh, was seeking his father and trying to make him understand. Often at the hour of death the passing spirit creates an apparition in the mind of some one especially dear. These spectral appearances, sometimes subjective, sometimes objective, are very real, very numerous, and so well established that it would be folly to deny them. I have no doubt now that the disturbance I experienced on that fatal day was due to a telepathic communication from my boy to me. What other explanation of the occurrence is valid? . . .

Ah! he filled my mind on that dread-

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ful night. His beautiful face appeared before me, his quaint words seemed to be respoken in my ears. I thought of my son with pride and with hope. A boy so beautiful, so gifted, so brilliant — surely for him there must be prepared a great career! Little did I dream that at this very moment his distracted mother was caressing his cold lips and crying to him to return to her. The night was sultry and oppressive. Towards eight o'clock the most violent thunderstorm I have ever experienced in England burst upon us. The heavens glowed with lightning and the crashes of thunder were appalling. Work was out of the question, and I prepared for bed. . . .

— It was eleven o'clock and a messenger rang the bell of the front door. Delayed by the storm the telegram was at last delivered, five hours late. And then I knew . . . and went mad. . . . My boy —

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my bonnie boy — the boy whom I had kissed in the earlier hours of that day . . . dead . . . drowned . . . gone. The abyss opened and engulfed me. . . .

I saw him the next day laid out upon the table in a sunny room overlooking a beautiful garden. A white sheet covered a human form. At first I dare not remove it. Oh! it was a ghastly dream surely! *That* could not be my boy. No! I was in the grip of a horrible nightmare, and soon I should wake up, rush to his room, and cover his warm flesh with embraces! Dead! never! It is all a trick of the senses, an illusion of the night. But I *had* to see . . . O God! the white face, the bound lips, the crossed hands, the closed eyes, the still form. . . . And this . . . my Anthony! O boy! why did you leave us? Come back to me. Come back. . . . Once a prophet stretched himself upon the dead body of a boy and life re-

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turned. . . . Heaven! repeat the miracle for this broken-hearted man. But there was no voice in reply. The little form never stirred. . . . Sweet, sweet laddie . . . *gone*. How can I believe it? How can I support it?

The rest passed like a dream — the inquest, the solemn service in the drawing-room, the lilies and the wild flowers he had gathered placed upon his coffin — the farewell to the little body, the final ceremony, and then the terrible loneliness.

Wife of mine, can I ever forget these first days of your agony? I thought I had lost *you* too. The blow was too sudden, too sharp. Had we received but a day's warning! But no! the bolt fell from a clear sky and smote us to the dust. That was the terror, the horror of it. One moment we were rejoicing in the sunshine, the next we were blinded in the abyss. . . .

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Friends and strangers alike were wonderfully kind. From every part of the country letters poured in full of sympathy and affection. Many of them came from people who *knew* what it meant, and in their letters a note was struck which was missing in the rest. There is a freemasonry of suffering, and only they who know the secret signs can communicate with the hearts of their brethren. The most formal letters came from married people who had never known the joy and the pain of parenthood. These spoke of the healing magic of time, or of the little fellow being "better off," or of the miseries and temptations of this world from which he had been delivered. Worst of all were the communications which spake of "God's will being done" — *God's will!* How bitter was this conventional expression! What hateful mockery it brought with it! I wondered

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how much God had to do with it. There stole into the mind a sentence from the Gospels — “It is *not* the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.” How then could I reconcile this tragedy with the beneficent will of a good God? How could I believe that the Gardener, having carefully tended a precious flower until its healthy bud gave promise of a perfect bloom, would, without reason, pluck it and throw it to the void? What sin had my innocent lad committed to warrant his unceremonious removal from life at a moment when the circle of which he was the centre was radiant with the light which he emitted? His father and his mother had loved and served God with joy and even sacrifice, and lo! this was their reward. . . . The light-hearted and the superficial can never understand the terrific challenge to

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Faith which an event of this kind offers. It is so easy to believe in the Heavenly Father when the sky is blue and the sun is shining. But what shall a man do when the thick fog envelops him and sun, moon, and stars are blotted out? It is in that awful darkness that the fight for the soul begins. Traditional phrases are useless then. The soul craves for knowledge and true peace.

The only thing of importance to me was the knowledge that my boy really lived in the spirit world. I wanted to know. Mere hope and vague belief were singularly unsatisfying. I turned to some hymns in one of the popular hymn books of the day and found more paganism in them than I had imagined. They were pitched in a minor key and spake of "sleeping in the tomb." Other hymns were different and spoke of heaven and a resurrection at the last day. But it all

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seemed remote and did not touch the present pressing need of the bruised spirit.

Then I began to read certain passages in the Old Testament, and I perceived at once the source of some of the more gloomy hymns about death. "That which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath: and man hath no preëminence above the beasts. . . . All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again" (Eccles. iii, 19). This, I decided, could never be the "word of *God*," even though it was found in the Bible. There must be something in religion more exalted than this dreary outlook — if "outlook" it can be called.

It was at this time that I came across a book which professed to show that

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“Christendom is all astray.” It is the textbook of a sect, numerically insignificant, but amazingly energetic. Its main plank is that the soul is not immortal: that there is no *inherent* principle in man which of necessity involves the survival of the act we call death. The thesis is that at death man falls into a profound sleep. He “ceases to be.” But at the Last Day he will be raised again miraculously, and then his fate will be declared. The bad will be “utterly destroyed,” while the good will inherit the Kingdom of God and reign over a renovated earth. The “proof” of all this consists in an artificial arrangement of texts, drawn chiefly from two poetical or dramatic books of the Old Testament, together with a display of philological juggling designed to give point to the “proof texts.” The book containing this precious compound was sent to me for my instruction, and,

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presumably, for my consolation. The effect was to create an intense irritation. Here was ignorance of the elementary principles of an historic interpretation of the Bible, joined to a sardonic humour, and from this blend it was expected that a grief-stricken man might draw inspiration and peace!

A few days after this edifying experience, one of the high priests of "Free Thought" was announced to lecture upon "Christian Fictions." In the syllabus of the lecture "belief in immortality" appeared as one of the "fictions" to be dealt with. It was that line in the announced programme that determined me to attend the lecture. The audience was not a very large one, and in no way was it distinguished, save for a few of the hardest faces I have ever seen. The lecturer was a dapper little man, with

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thin lips, a high brow, an intellectual air, and an unmusical voice. Clever he was, undoubtedly. If his quotations were the result of original reading, then he was a widely read man. He was out for blood. Without the gloves he attacked, in turn, nearly every Christian belief. God, Jesus Christ, the Bible, sin, salvation — themes to which earnest men have given centuries of thought — were disposed of in fifty minutes. A wave of the hand, a syllogism, an appeal to science (in general terms), a sarcasm or two, a strong appeal to evolution, a trenchant attack upon the hypocrisy of the clergy, some clever mother-wit — and the thing was done. The “fiction of immortality” was reserved for the end. In hard, metallic tones, which contained no trace of any genuine human feeling, the lecturer “tore into ribbons,” as his chairman phrased it, the belief that the human

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spirit survived the shock of death. All human hopes of reunion, he declared, were pleasant but idle dreams. The audience listened, laughed, applauded, and then dispersed. I intercepted the lecturer as he left the hall and remarked to him: "I have recently lost a child by drowning; what have you to say to me?" And the answer came quick and pat: "I'm very sorry . . . it's your ill luck . . . you must bear it like a man." And that was all.

The months have passed by and Christmas is here. This is the season I have dreaded. My thoughts wander back to last Christmas; to the brilliantly lighted shops, the fairy caves, the array of toys, the decorations, the throngs of excited children threading their way through crowded streets and spacious emporiums, the parties, the dances, and the wonder-

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ful Christmas Day itself. My little Anthony was the soul of the festival so far as it concerned the circle of our relations and friends. The whole of the rejoicings centred in him. For him we decorated the fir-tree and hung it with lanterns. For him we had the children's party. For him we had all the fun. He was the life of it all. He had outgrown the fiction of the traditional "Father Christmas," but he entered into the human meaning of the festival with all his heart. His ringing laughter and his compelling merriment renewed the youth of the most ancient person who joined us at the festival. He could persuade old maids to skip like girls, and crusty bachelors to play at leap-frog. Christmas was the more radiant because of him.

To-day I pass through the crowded streets a sorrow-stricken man. I dare not look at the toys which fill the win-

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dows, nor follow the children into the caves. I pass along the highway looking ahead beyond the throngs of people, beyond the brilliance of the thoroughfares — thinking of *him*. O happy parents and happier children! how I envy you your joy! The world is gay for you. The hardships of the time are submerged in the Christmas joy. The Divine Child who was born in Bethlehem long ago is being reborn in your innocent pleasures. The Angels are singing once more their song to the simple-hearted. And I turn to lament with Rachel, for the Herod of death has slain my child.

Every seat placed around the Christmas table was filled. The elder children, grown up, were there. From afar a family group had come. Others, a little lonely, came in to share the good cheer. No shadow was permitted to fall upon

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the happy group. Everything was as Christmas should be when adults alone form the circle — music, quiet games, songs, puzzles. The guests ate and talked and laughed, while two people apparently joining in it all, were in reality thinking of one thing only — *the empty place*. That husband and wife dared not to seek each other's faces. Each knew the other's thoughts.

A few weeks ago there came to us in a parcel a few of his school-books and personal treasures that had been left behind in the school-house. Here were the sums he had worked out, the ever firmer calligraphy showing the development in his handwriting, a little essay on a cat and another on a tree, a few marbles, a cap, a bat, and a prize awarded for "high excellence" and good conduct. Insignificant things in the eyes of strangers, but

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unspeakably precious to us because *he* had handled and wrought these things.

The most trying thing of all was the distribution to others of his clothing. Why should we retain these warm and well-made things when the children of the poor were often ill-clad and badly shod? To me fell this sad task; the mother dared not attempt it. There were jerseys he had never worn, laid away by a prudent mother in readiness for "next year," woollen under-clothing, knitted socks, overcoats, a dressing-gown, tweed and woollen suits, an Eton suit worn last Christmas, and several pairs of boots and slippers. Ah! little son, never again on this earth shall we behold you arrayed in your familiar garments! It was hard to part with your belongings, but it is some satisfaction to know that a few poor children wear your clothing and experience something of the

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warmth and comfort which we were enabled to give you. And, little fellow, I am certain that you share our pleasure in this regard, for you were ever generous and gave to others of the best that had been given to you. *And I know now that you are alive and conscious of us.* Let me now tell how this joy came to us.

Brought up in an "orthodox" manner, I believed in heaven and hell as most people do, but in quite a general and unspecified way, as again is the case with most people. In early manhood, however, a great change came over my thinking. The orthodox heaven and hell appealed to me less and less. The static and ecstatic conditions set forth in "Catholic" doctrine could be reconciled, I found, neither with common-sense and common justice nor with the New Testament. I discovered that the New Testament had surprisingly little to say about the

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future life, and that what it did say was expressed, not in terms of dogma, but rather in images and parables. Details concerning the future life I found to be almost entirely lacking. But I also found set forth in the plainest manner, on the one hand, certain principles of spiritual progress, and, on the other, certain principles of retribution, so clear and convincing that I was bound to accept them. They satisfied, completely, the human sense of justice. But this change of view lessened my interest in the future life and gave me a deeper interest in the present life. I felt that I need not trouble about death and beyond death if my life here below was tuned to the Will of God as Christ had revealed it. When death came, I should be quite ready for it. As for my friends who had died, I felt no anxiety on their behalf. I believed them to be in the hands of God

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and that was a quite sufficient guarantee that all would be well. And so I continued for several years. But when little Anthony left us, the whole question of the life beyond suddenly became acute. What had been previously little more than an academic question, now became intensely personal and urgent. General beliefs were of no use. My boy had gone and with him had gone part of my soul, and I wanted to know where he had gone, and what he was doing, and whether I could communicate with him or he with me. I absolutely refused to believe that at death so beautiful and brilliant a life as his was finally ended. The Universe, after all, is rational, and it would be wholly irrational were man, the crown of terrestrial creation (to produce whom Nature has made so prolonged and marvellous an effort), to share the fate of vegetables and low life.

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Masterpieces, the production of which entails infinite patience and toil, are not intended for the scrap-heap after a brief existence. . . . No! my boy must be alive somewhere and I felt I could not rest until I knew — *knew* where he was and what was his occupation.

I have always been suspicious of spiritualism. Years ago I investigated the subject and then turned from it with repugnance. I detected one medium in open fraud. I witnessed phenomena which were entirely unconvincing, and heard long trance addresses which bore no mark of having been delivered by the entities to whom they were referred. While there was much to startle and to set one thinking, there was also much that left behind an uneasy feeling. Further, I saw no evidence whatever that many of these investigators were spirit-

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ually superior to others. And finally it appeared to me quite absurd to make a "religion" of spiritualism, even if all the claims it made for itself were indisputably true. Religion, if it be true, is surely something far removed from communicating with those who, although they have passed on, are still only human. If religion does not deal with God, why call it religion? It will be seen then that the experiences which I have now to record, were not in any way due to prejudice in favour of "spiritualism."

It began in a simple way. Quite by accident I came across a little book entitled "God's Wonderland." It is the story of the passing of a little boy of four and of his subsequent communications with his mother by means of automatic writing, and in other ways. The book contains a preface by a very well-known divine and statesman. It

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was this that induced me to read it, for I knew the writer to be a man of the soundest judgment and of transparent honesty: a statesman and a public man who has the entire confidence of the vast public that knows him. In his Preface he guarantees the *bona fides* of the lady who wrote the book. She is a well-known Wesleyan, residing in the heart of England. Previous to her great experience with her departed child she had never been interested in occult matters. Her experience was not *sought* by her — it *came* to her. And she has given to the world a startling and consoling story of communication with and concerning her lost child. My wife wrote to her, and the sequel shall be told a little later on. If little Philip could be put into communication with his mother, why could not my Anthony be put into communication with me?

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But was the thing wrong? There was a savour of necromancy and witchcraft about it, and this was forbidden by the Old Testament. A little further reflection, however, gave a new aspect to the matter. What connection, I asked, could there be between the dark rites associated with ancient occultism and those voluntary disclosures of the Spirit World to which Mrs. —— and thousands more have been witness? To place the two things on the same level seemed to me to be quite irrational. Whatever prohibitions were attached to the one, never appeared in connection with the other. If it be wrong, as so many allege, to receive communications from the Spirit World, then what shall we say concerning the story of such communications of which the Bible is full? What of the communications received by Abraham, Moses, and the like? And I fully understood the

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truth of Sir Oliver Lodge's warning, that this is not everybody's business — at present I was willing, therefore, to receive or not to receive communications from the other side. And I believed, further, that if I committed myself to the Divine Spirit of Truth I should be guarded from falsehood.

My wife wrote to Mrs. — and put our case before her, begging her, if the opportunity occurred, to obtain from her departed relative — through whom she had obtained so much information about Philip — some news of our boy, if that were possible. In less than a week we received a startling reply. Our boy had been found in the "Summerland." By means of a kind of "wireless" they had got into communication with him. And in proof that it was really he whom they had found, the messenger said: "Ask

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the parents if he was known by his remarkable laughter and his wonderful eyes . . . tell them he is known here by these same things. He is the life of the group of children with whom he lives in Summerland. His laughter is infectious.” Now these *were* two of the things by which he was known upon earth. I have already written of his eyes, which were the most remarkable I have ever seen in a child. And everybody knew him by his peculiar laugh. There was a quality in it which distinguished it from other laughter. No matter how many children were present, those who were near the boy and knew him would say (although they could not see him), “Listen to Anthony,” and they too would catch the infection of his merriment. . . . The eyes and the laugh! These were trivial matters to be the subject of a communication from the other side!

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But they were not trivial to us. They were signs by which we recognised the boy. How could Mrs. —, who knew absolutely nothing about us or about the boy, have hit so perfectly upon two of his chief characteristics? Upon any hypothesis the delineation was remarkable.

This, however, was but a beginning. An indefinable sense that the boy was quite near to us at times settled at last into a definite conviction upon the point. I know how easy it is for the human mind to be subject to illusions, and how without difficulty one sees what is sought. A slight trouble in the brain or a sudden blow will produce the illusion of objective lights — men “see stars.” And it is a simple matter for a person to imagine that he “hears voices” when all that happens is the recital of a mental monologue. I shall not therefore stress the experiences which came to three

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members of our family on at least half a dozen occasions. I shall mention them only and then pass on. Thrice were we awakened at the dead of night by a familiar voice: "Hallo, dad and mum" . . . and then a merry voice which said: "I'm the only member of the C—— family you can't see, but I can see you." . . . At another time a visitor staying with us was awakened in a similar manner. *Her* name was spoken and the sentence we had heard was repeated to our guest. . . . On another occasion — the room being in midnight darkness — a luminous cloud passed across the room, rested over my wife for a moment, and then vanished. Determined to discover if there was any physical reason for this phenomenon, I rose, drew up the blind, and looked out. Not a light was visible anywhere, and no vehicle had passed the house. This cloud appeared, in all, four

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times. Upon the last occasion the light in it grew intense, and then, for a brief flash only, the face of my boy appeared in the centre — all radiant and smiling. I do not stress these happenings. I simply record them as part of the story.

It was not long before something very definite came — something concerning which there could be no doubt. Two friends came in, both of them possessed of psychic gifts. A common impulse led us to sit around a small table. In a few minutes the table began to move and to rock violently. I asked if any one invisible to us was present, and at once the table came down heavily three times.

“Spell out your name,” I said.

Slowly but steadily the letters came. The result was startling. The name given was that of my wife’s cousin, an airman who was killed in the war. My

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wife was not thinking of him at all. Indeed she was thinking of some one else. But it was little we could obtain from him. There was no message he gave that is worth recording. All he said was: "You need not trouble about Anthony; the boy is all right. You will hear from him soon." It was not very satisfactory, but it made us think furiously. But in a day or two we heard something that made us think still more. It was at the end of the day. My wife and I were reading in the drawing-room when like a flash the thought came: "Anthony is here and wants to speak to you." I remained quiet, believing that my wife was too tired for the experiment. But in a few moments she said: "I have a feeling that Anthony wants to speak to us. . . . Shall we try?" A simultaneous impulse having seized both of us, it seemed wise to yield to it. The next twenty minutes

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can never be forgotten by either of us. A "guide" (as they called him) brought our little lad to us, and we talked to him until the power faded away.

"Tell us where you are now, laddie."

"Daddy, I'm standing between you and mummy. I'm touching you. Can't you feel me? Can't you see me? I can see you."

"Are you happy, boy?"

"Yes, daddy, ever so happy."

"Tell us where you live now — can you?"

"It's what they call Summerland, daddy."

"And what do you do there?"

"Oh! go to school, and play games."

"Tell us, would you like to come back to us, darling?"

There was a long pause and the question was repeated. Then slowly and with hesitation came the answer:

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“I’d rather not now, but I want you and mummy to come here to me.”

Then I asked him about his passing over — did he remember being drowned. And the answer came:

“Yes, I remember it, *but it wasn’t much*. I soon got over it. I have lots of friends here who look after me.”

Then we determined upon a test.

“Do you remember your playmates here, laddie?” I asked.

We were thinking of two of them.

But slowly the answer came: “Yes, I liked Short best.”

It was not the name we expected. We had never dreamed of him. But later we learned that “Short” was his real favourite. Certainly we did not “read” this from our own minds.

I call attention to the phrase he used “it wasn’t much.” It was a phrase quite characteristic of him. He was a hardy

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lad and he took his "scraps" and bruises with stoical indifference. He would say: "Oh! it's nothing, it isn't much." Later we shall encounter the phrase again in another connection.

We have had no further sittings with him. These seemed unnecessary after what happened a little later. The sitting I have referred to ended with these words from the guide: "You will get something very soon from a local sensitive." And we did.

I had heard a great deal of a Mr. Hope and a Mrs. Buxton of Crewe. Mr. Hope is a Lancashire man, and is, or was, a member of the Salvation Army. Some years ago he discovered, by the merest accident, that he had a special and almost uncanny gift of being able to project upon a sensitive plate an "extra," which was generally the photograph of some deceased person. He could not ac-

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count for his gift then: he cannot account for it now. He has simply to accept it and to use it. I have seen scores of these photographs and they present a delicate and difficult problem. *What* is it that is photographed? It is something invisible to the naked human eye, but something that the more sensitive film of the plate can catch. Is it a thought-form created by Mr. Hope and Mrs. Buxton, or a thought-form created by the sitter, or a form built up by spiritual beings on the other side and prepared for the camera? I do not here enter into the controversy. I simply tell my own story.

My wife and I determined to go to Crewe. In order to eliminate every element of suspicion or the possibility of fraud, we took particular precautions to secure absolutely perfect conditions for the experiment. I was aware that sug-

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gestions of imposture had been made in connection with these photographs, hence it was necessary to be very careful. A secretary of a local branch of the Society for Psychical Research wrote to Mr. Hope asking him to fix a time for a visit from two strangers, whose identity was completely hidden from him. In addition to this a packet of plates was obtained direct from the Ilford people, who were requested to X-ray the contents of the packet with a private mark known only to them. The packet came by parcels post, and my hands alone opened it at the proper time.

There is no suggestion of mystery about the house in Crewe. It is a small, uninspiring dwelling, consisting, downstairs, of a small parlour, a kitchen, an outhouse, a room under the stairs, which serves as a dark-room. The outhouse is used as a "studio." At one end of it is a

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cage containing some birds. At the other end are a few household oddments curtained off. The space between the two contains nothing but a couple of chairs and the camera tripod. The place is marked by primitive simplicity.

Mr. Hope is a blunt, plain-spoken, straightforward Lancashire man. He received us without asking our names, or anything concerning our affairs. He, Mrs. Buxton, our little party of three and two others sat, *in full daylight*, around a small table. The packet of Ilford plates was then placed by me in the centre of the table. Never for a moment did it leave my sight. I took good care of that. Even had the packet been changed in some swift covering movement, this would have been to the disadvantage of Mr. Hope, for my plates had been treated in a special way by the Ilford people, and it was impossible for

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him or any one else to reproduce these private markings.

Mr. Hope is a religious man — a member of the Salvation Army I have said. He conducted a short religious service and offered a prayer of touching simplicity. “If it be Thy will, O Father, may we have some manifestation of the Spirit World,” was one sentence of the prayer. Then the hands of the entire company were placed over the packet of plates — to “magnetise” it.

I went into the dark-room, unsealed my packet, wrote my signature across the corner of each plate, and then filled the carrier, which never left my hand until it was placed in the camera. My wife and I sat eight times, and our friend sat four times in front of the camera. During each exposure Mr. Hope and Mrs. Buxton joined their hands and closed their eyes. Then I returned to the

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dark-room, took out the plates, verified the signature, and proceeded to the development. Again the plates never left my hands. I took them out into the large kitchen to wash them. When all was finished, it was seen that six of the plates contained no "extras." These were discarded. Upon the other six certain forms were clearly discernible. Feverishly the printing went forward, and this was the final result:

Taking the plates in the order of their exposure, the first revealed a mass of white matter something like wool, in the midst of which a face was forming. My wife and I were in the foreground of the picture: this white material was behind us.

The second and third pictures yielded better results. The white material was denser, and a number of faces were visible, but indistinct. One face, however,

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had moved down and rested between the two sitters.

The final pictures startled us, for there, clearly and sharply defined, *was the spirit photograph of our little Anthony*. Had he indeed been present and “sat” for his photograph? If not, then how was that unmistakable face impressed upon the plate?

We left Crewe with a feeling that the “real” things are not the material things that we measure and weigh and see. These clumsy things are illusive. It is the spiritual things that are real. I am bound to add that Mr. Hope took no fee for his work (he never does), although no gift could have been too handsome as a reward for what we received through him that day.

The most remarkable thing of all

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followed. I heard one day of a young and smart business man — a member of a City firm — who possessed a remarkable psychic gift, which he placed freely at the disposal of any to whom it might be useful. At my request he came in for a meal. He knew nothing of me beyond the general and somewhat vague fact that we had lost a loved one. He did not know that it was a boy. He told us that God had given to him the gifts of clairvoyance and clairsaudience and that he was only too happy to help, by their means, any who were in trouble. He was not a professional psychic, and *not* a spiritualist. For spiritualism, as a religion, he had apparently not much regard.

For a time nothing very striking happened beyond the fact that he grew agitated and distressed. Then I asked if it would be helpful were some of the

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boy's clothing or personal effects produced. The cap he wore when he was drowned and the red dressing-gown he wore every night after his bath were then brought down. The effect was almost magical. The moment the clairvoyant handled these articles, it seemed as if a curtain were rent and the boy stood before him. The description he gave of him was so amazing that it could only have been given by one who saw and heard what was hidden from the rest of us. "I see a boy standing in our midst. I cannot tell exactly how old he is. He may be anything from eight to ten years of age. If he is eight, he is very tall for his age.

(NOTE: *This was the very remark made by the Coroner at the inquest; he was exceptionally large for his years.*)

I can hear him laugh. *What a remarkable laugh it is!* . . . He is looking at me.

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... Oh, what eyes he has! Such a depth in them! Such long eyelashes! I think these eyes must be the most remarkable part about him. They are wonderful. . . .

“I see him dressed in a grey tweed suit. It is quite new. He is wearing knitted stockings, with some curious work at the top, where they turn down. Part of it is green and part yellow, and I think I can see a thread of red in it.

(NOTE: *This was the suit and these the stockings in which he left home on the fatal day.*)

He is showing me a watch that he wants you to recognise him by. It is a big watch and he is very proud of it. There is a steel chain attached to it. He is winding it up.

(NOTE: *This watch was my gift to him at Christmas. He had seen it in a shop and was keenly set on having it. He carried it with him everywhere, and at school, especially, he was very proud of it.*)

He is now taking me to a church and

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pointing out to me the sacristan, who is a very good friend of his, he says. He runs about the church and plays with his friend who is very fond of him.

(NOTE: *He had a great liking for this man and often used to steal off to see him. When the boy's death was announced, this sacristan broke down completely, saying, "I have lost my best friend."*)

There is something peculiar about this boy. When he says his prayers he does not kneel down at the bedside. He is clothed in a red gown and *he kneels in the middle of the bed* to say his prayers.

(NOTE: *Wisely or unwisely this was a little privilege we gave him. He always knelt down in the middle of the bed.*)

Oh . . . this . . . is . . . dreadful. I am following him now out of a garden. He is going towards the river. There are some boys playing. He is getting on a raft. I think it is a raft, or a plank. He is playing . . . I see him pulling hard at

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something. Is it a piece of rope or a chain? He is tugging at it. . . . It suddenly gives away. . . . Ah! . . . ah! . . . He is thrown clean over. . . . He strikes his head against a piece of iron. . . . He is down . . . down . . . in the water. . . . He comes up under the raft and he cannot rise. Oh, God . . . it is dreadful. . . . He is still now.”

(NOTE: *This is the only rational explanation of his death. The boy could swim. We never understood how he fell into the water, nor could we account for the bruise on his temple, nor understand why he never came to the surface. The clairvoyant saw it all. His story fits in with the facts as we knew them.*)

At this point the clairvoyant was overcome and could not proceed. It was some time before he was able to resume. Then he continued:

“The boy is smiling. He is speaking to you. He says, ‘*It wasn’t much. I soon got over it. It hurt you more than it hurt me.*’

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(NOTE: *Here is the characteristic phrase "It wasn't much." The clairvoyant knew nothing of the fact that the boy often used it when he was upon earth.*)

Tell mum and dad I'm very happy now.
Tell dad I remember the motor drives
we had . . .

(NOTE: *The boy was mad on motoring. All his friends who had cars took him for a spin. The last time he and I were out together was in a car.*)

I can see you all, but how is it you don't
see me? Why don't you speak to me? . . .
I don't like to see you cry, it makes me
sad.'"

A few weeks later the same clairvoyant wrote to us to say that he had a further message for us about the boy. Two or three friends came in, and after a time of quietness, the communications began. Our dining-room was brilliantly lighted. There was nothing of the apparatus of necromancy. We sat and

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chatted in a perfectly natural manner about various subjects and then suddenly a lady clairvoyante, who had accompanied Mr. B——, turned to my wife (whom she had never previously seen) and said:

“Madam, there is standing beside you an old school-fellow of yours, who is most desirous to let you know that she is alive on the other side. She has the appearance of a girl of sixteen. Her hair is jet black and it is tied behind with blue ribbon. She reminds you that she went to school with you — a school kept by two old dames. It is thirty years ago. She died of consumption. Can you recall her?”

My wife searched her mind and replied:

“The description means nothing to me. I cannot recall any such girl. Can you get her name?”

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A few minutes elapsed and then slowly came the name.

“She says it is Lizzie . . . W——.”

My wife was confounded. She then recalled Lizzie W—— who had been at one school with her. The whole figure returned to her mind and she admitted the truth of the description. It was a surprising experience. . . .

Meanwhile Mr. B—— was becoming agitated. He was evidently under deep emotion. In a few moments he said:

“Little Anthony has been waiting to speak to you. He is quite excited. He says, ‘Where do I come in? I want to say something. Tell daddy to watch me walk.’”

And then Mr. B—— *rose and walked across the floor in the comical manner which Anthony affected when he was in a humorous mood.* Remember, Mr. B—— had never seen the boy and knew abso-

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lutely nothing of his manner of life. But *we* had seen that droll walk many times as the dear lad, with a boy's love of imitation, reproduced the exceptional shuffle of Charlie Chaplin. . . .

But more was to come. For half an hour the lad spoke to us through Mr. B——. Anthony told us of the Norfolk suit he loved so much and in which he had been drowned. He spoke of his school cricket blazer, of which he was so proud, and which he had worn only twice or thrice. . . . He described his cricket set and some of the toys with which he had played. . . . Then he spoke of his old friend Carlo — the big sheep dog, with whom he had been photographed, and who was so fond of him: the dog lived in the country with the boy's grandfather and Mr. B—— had no idea of his existence.

The two most remarkable things,

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however, were Anthony's reference to his Indian outfit and to his trick of hiding the keys of the house. I had bought him in America a boy's Indian outfit with belt and tomahawk complete. He wore it for the first time on his seventh birthday. None of the party assembled in our dining-room knew of the existence of this costume. But Anthony wanted us to recognise him by a description that would mentally appeal to us, his parents, as to no others. . . . With regard to the keys, one of his favourite tricks was to remove the keys from the various doors of the house and hide them — *we never knew where*. They disappeared and reappeared in our absence. On this night he said to us, through Mr. B——:

“Do you remember how I hid the keys, daddy? Well! I'll tell you where I put them. I hid them under the carpet.” . . .

Trifles! — some will say. To a stranger

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yes, but not to us to whom these “trifles” were a convincing proof that the boy associated with them was reminding us of them and that he was really alive.

After a few minutes the clairvoyant suddenly said: “There is somebody here who is with Anthony, and he wants you to know that he is alive and progressing. He is related to you, madam. He has the appearance of an old man, with iron-grey hair and beard, and with a shaven lip. He says you will know who he is by the seal he wears. He is showing it to you. Can you guess?”

My wife replied: “It is my grandfather. I played with that seal hundreds of times when I was a child. I have never seen another seal quite like it.”

The clairvoyant continued: “He is smiling. He felt sure you would recognise him by the seal. He is very glad. He wants you to understand that he

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knows all about the coming over of little Anthony. Have no fear about the child's welfare, he says. He will grow up here and you will rejoin him one day."

This brings the narrative down to the present time. There may be further communications from him. Of this we cannot be sure, but we have received enough to make us certain that he is still with us. We can no longer doubt that he is alive on the other side of the veil and able to communicate with us through a proper sensitive, or even directly, if we ourselves are only sufficiently sensitive.

This new experience has transformed our lives. The spirit world in which my wife and I have always "believed" has now become a very real place to us. We see now death in its true perspective. It is still our "enemy," as Saint Paul says,

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for it has crept into our ranks and stolen from us the best we had. But it has not been able to harm the precious life which was prematurely snatched from us. Grief in part remains. How can it be otherwise when the loss to us has been so terrible? The grief, however, is not at what has befallen *him*. He is happy and he is developing upon a higher plane of life. Of that we are now certain. The messages we have received from and of him are not puerile inventions. They answer to the facts of which we have knowledge, to the fitness of things, to the ascensional principle of life, and to the deepest cravings of our stricken hearts. Above all they answer to the fullest implications of that Christian faith by which we live. Christianity is built upon the fact that a Divine Man challenged death and won the fight. In that victory He won every other victory and made

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clear, by an irrefutable demonstration, that the spirit world is the reality of which this world is but the pale reflection. To believe in and to practice communion with the departed, it is not necessary to become a spiritualist. It is sufficient to remain a Christian—but a courageous Christian withal, holding fast to the personal Christ as the Lord of all, while opening the mind to the new divine light which is streaming upon the world.

So long as I remain in this tabernacle of flesh a scar of the heart will remain, but the wound has ceased to bleed and healing has come through faith and knowledge. And one day will come, most certainly, reunion with the loved boy. Meanwhile, there is now something here below worth living for.

I should like to be permitted, in conclusion, to paraphrase a few verses of Longfellow's beautiful and pathetic poem

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“Resignation” — which has meant so much to us — and say:

There is no death, what seems so is transition;
This life of mortal breath
Is but the suburb of the life Elysian
Whose portals we call death.

He is not dead, the child of our affection,
But gone unto that school
Where he no longer needs our poor protection,
And Christ Himself doth rule.

Day after day we think what he is doing
In those bright realms of air;
Year after year, his tender steps pursuing,
Behold him grown more fair.

Thus do we walk with him, and keep unbroken
The bond which nature gives,
Thinking that our remembrance, though un-
spoken,
May reach him where he lives.

Not as a child shall we again behold him:
For when with raptures wild
In our embraces we again enfold him
He will not be a *child*,

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But a fair youth within his Father's mansion,
Clothed with celestial grace:
And beautiful with all the soul's expansion
Shall we behold his face.

THE END

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OUT OF THE NIGHT

By Frederick Orin Bartlett

Confronted by the mystery of death for the first time, the author resumed his way from a position of more or less open skepticism to an absolute and unqualified conviction of immortality. Our belief is that this personal experience may be of service to others just because it does not represent the platitudinous of a layman, rather than the dogmatic logic of a philosopher.

The book was written with no thought of general publication, as the author felt freer to express himself than he might have felt under other circumstances.

"It is we the living who make our dead an *out*," he concludes.

Certain facts about death are inescapable and measurable and must be accepted strictly. But that, he believes, is by no means the end of the matter. Starting from this point, he suggests that the future of our dead, so far as we the living are concerned, is largely in our own hands.

